



CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

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May 23, 1996

The Honorable Dick Monteith
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2048
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Monteith:

Thank you for your May 16, 1996 letter about the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

As you note, Central Valley farming communities use Bay-Delta water to supply a significant proportion of our world's food. They and, through them, the people they feed, have a tremendous stake in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

The Program is now in the early stages of developing a fair, workable solution to the complex and interwoven problems in the Bay-Delta. Recently we presented ten draft alternative solutions for public review. Over the next two months, we will distill hundreds of pages of valuable public input -- including your letter -- to refine these ten alternatives down to a list of three to five.

As you no doubt know, one of the ten alternatives suggested a heavy reliance on urban and agricultural demand management, including significant voluntary retirement of agricultural acreage. More than 200 people came to public meetings in Bakersfield and Los Banos to tell us that some of these ideas won't work, at least not the way they are proposed now. So we are making changes.

While we, like most Californians, remain committed to rigorously efficient water use, we are redesigning the water use efficiency component of the alternatives to reduce reliance on land retirement and to give communities a wide range of conservation options. We are also giving careful consideration to a request from several Central Valley farmers that we work toward restoring water supply. While the CALFED Bay-Delta Program does not aim to solve all of California's water problems, we hope to create more opportunities for communities to increase their water supply.

CALFED Agencies

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

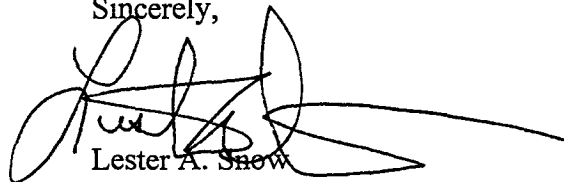
Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

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Senator Monteith, according to our Program's solution principles, the preferred Bay-Delta solution must be equitable, must reduce conflicts among beneficial water uses, and must not redirect significant negative impacts. (The solution must also be affordable, implementable, and durable.) In other words, a solution that benefits one region or interest at the expense of another is simply unacceptable. With help from people like you, I am confident we can ensure that all stakeholders, including Central Valley farmers, will benefit from this Program to roughly the same degree.

Thank you again for letter. We will add your comments to our official record and give them the highest consideration as we work toward a Bay-Delta solution. If you have any further questions or comments, please contact me or other members of our Program staff at any time.

Sincerely,



Lester A. Snow
Executive Director